Illegal felling of trees in Slmllpal

2167. MISS FRIDA TOPNO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether illegal felling of trees in Simlipal reserved forest in Orissa by jungle mafias is rampant;

(b) if so, the number and types of trees felled during the last one year;

(c) the number of elephants being hired by Government to guard the jungle; and

(d) the method to be used by mahavats of elephants?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No, sir.

(b) As reported by the State Government, illicit felling of trees in Simlipal forest is mainly confined to Sal, Pijasal, Sissoo, Kurum etc. and during 2000-2001 (upto June 2001), 1637 cases were booked involving 5621.59 cu. ft. of timber, 161.15 Qtl of fire-wood and 460 Nos of poles.

(c) To start with 3 elephants are proposed to be procured for this purpose during this year.

(d) Traditional methods that have been used by mahavats for patrolling of forests by elephants will be used in Simlipal Tiger Reserve also.

Assistance from Norway to upgrade J & K Forests

2168. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Norway has offered aid to upgrade the degraded forests in J&K;

(b) whether it is also a fact that many global institutions have given aid to restore Dal Lake in Kashmir; and

(c) if so, what are the details for both the projects?